

## Resources

**For more information on medical conditions and driving, contact:**

Arizona Dept. of Transportation  
Motor Vehicle Division  
Medical Review Program  
1452 N. Elesio Felix Jr. Way  
Avondale, AZ 85323  
623-925-5795

**For additional information on Alzheimer's Disease, contact the Alzheimer's Association:**

[www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

Desert Southwest Chapter  
1028 E. McDowell Rd.  
Phoenix, AZ 85006-2622  
602-528-0545  
1-800-392-0022

Northern Arizona Region  
225 Grove Ave., Ste. B  
Prescott, AZ 86301  
928-771-9257  
1-800-773-7840  
(outside Yavapai County)

Southern Arizona Region  
5132 E. Pima St.  
Tucson, AZ 85712  
520-322-6601  
1-800-425-9080

**or contact:**

Governor's Advisory Council on Aging  
P.O. Box 6123-008A  
Phoenix, AZ 85005-6123  
602-542-4710  
[gaca@mail.de.state.az.us](mailto:gaca@mail.de.state.az.us)

**Governor's  
Advisory Council on Aging  
P.O. Box 6123-008A  
Phoenix, AZ 85005  
602-542-4710**

**[gaca@mail.de.state.az.us](mailto:gaca@mail.de.state.az.us)**

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Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Quality Service, Organizational Pride,  
Client Self-Sufficiency

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# ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE and Related Dementias & DRIVING



## Suggestions for Caregivers



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

## Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disorder that affects an estimated 4 million American adults. The rate of progression varies from person to person.

As a caregiver of a person with Alzheimer's disease, you are in a difficult spot. At some point, you need to encourage this person to give up driving. The safety of the individual and others depends on your actions.



Many of the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease can have an effect on safe driving:

- Memory loss
- Inability to perform routine tasks
- Impaired judgement
- Disorientation
- Personality change
- Impaired visual or spatial perception
- Reduced response/reaction time
- Diminished attention span

## Assessing Driving Ability

To assess the driving ability of a person with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia, answer these questions:

- Does he or she become confused while driving?

- Does he or she seem accident prone?
- Does he or she have difficulty understanding road signs?



If you've answered yes to any of these questions, you need to take action to protect yourself and others.

## Taking Action

If you believe a person can no longer drive safely, there are options available.

- **Encourage the person to stop driving and return the driver's license.** You cannot return a license for someone else. The driver must sign a cancellation form, available from the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD), stating he or she is surrendering the license.  
Either you or the driver can send the signed statement and license to the MVD. The mailing address can be found on the back panel of this brochure. The signed form and license can also be taken to an MVD service center.
- **Talk to the person's physician about the driving problems you observe.** The physician may make an assessment of the individual, or refer the person to a specialist for assessment. You can then
  - 1) advise the person to stop driving;
  - 2) write to the MVD requesting retesting of the person's driving skills or a medical

evaluation; 3) have the physician provide on their office letterhead "unable to drive" to serve as a visual cue or reminder for the person.

- **Write a letter to the MVD.** The letter must include the person's full name (with middle initial, if any), date of birth and current address. Describe your concerns about the person's driving. A person's age alone is not cause for a license withdrawal action. Information in a person's medical file with the MVD is confidential. However, it is subject to subpoena if the case goes to court.

The letter must be signed. The MVD will review the information and take appropriate actions. The division may send the driver a medical examination report to be completed by his or her physician. A written, vision or driving skills re-examination may be required. It is possible all of the above may be required.

- **Keep car keys out of the reach of the person,** if you believe he or she can no longer drive safely.



- **Disable the vehicle.** Remove the distributor cap or the coil wire, for instance.
- **Discuss the situation with your local Alzheimer's Association chapter.** Phone numbers are listed on the last panel of this brochure.